18. (Amended) A method according to Claim 16, wherein said substrate is a natural or synthetic cork, and said coating or diffusion layer prevents or inhibits passage of flavor-active or odor-active compounds from said cork to an alcoholic beverage in contact with said cork.

19. (Amended) A method according to Claim 18, wherein said flexible component is sufficiently flexible to allow the coated cork to be compressed and then to recover during a bottling process.

20. (Amended) A method according to Claim 16, wherein said flavor-active compounds are trichloroanisoles (TCA).

21. (Amended) A method according to Claim 16, wherein said copolymer is selected from the group consisting of graft, alternating and block copolymers.

22. (Amended) A method according to Claim 16, wherein said flexible component is formed from silicon-based monomers.

23. (Amended) A method according to Claim 16, wherein said copolymer is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylacetate (PVA) copolymers, polyurethane copolymers and ionomers, terephthalate copolymers, styrene-acrylonitrile (SAN)/ acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene (ABS) copolymers, (vinylidene) copolymers, epoxy copolymers, amide copolymers, Bisphenol copolymers, Bisphenol A (BPA) - epichlorohydrin copolymers, poly (methyl) methacrylate copolymers, poly(methacrylic acid) copolymers, cellulose copolymers, polyethylene vinyl alcohol copolymers, silane copolymers and siloxane copolymers.

24. (Amended) A method according to Claim 23, wherein said copolymer is a polyvinylacetate (PVA) copolymer.